

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 1026

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SUBJ: FERNANDEZ MALDONADO AND TWO OTHER MINISTERS SWORN IN

REF: LIMA 0092

1. PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ SWORE IN GENERAL JORGE FERNANDEZ MALDONADO AS PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF WAR ON JANUARY 31, THUS ENDING SPECULATION AS TO WHETHER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WOULD ACTUALLY TAKE OFFICE IN THE FACE OF SUBSTANTIAL OPPOSITION CENTERED IN THE NAVY AND EXTENDING TO SOME ELEMENTS OF ARMY AND AIR FORCE.

2. AT SAME JANUARY 31 CEREMONY PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ SWORE IN INTERIOR MINISTER BRIGADIER GENERAL LUIS CISNEROS VIZQUERRA, WHO HAS BEEN CHIEF OF THE SOCIAL MOBILIZATION AGENCY (SINAMOS), AND MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINES GENERAL ARTURO LA TORRE DI TOLLA. OUTGOING INTERIOR MINISTER CESAR CAMPOS QUESADA RETIRED WHILE ENERGY AND MINES MINISTER LA VERA BECOMES ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF REPLACING FERNANDEZ MALDONADO. GENERAL CISNEROS' REPLACEMENT AS SINAMOS CHIEF IS BRIGADIER GENERAL GERMAN VELARDE BOZANO.

3. COMMENT: MORALES BERMUDEZ HAD PUBLICLY STATED THAT FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WOULD BECOME PRIME MINISTER. HAD FERNANDEZ MALDONADO BEEN BLOCKED AFTER ALL, THIS MIGHT HAVE SERVED TO UNDERMINE
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CREDIBILITY AND EVEN AUTHORITY OF MORALES BERMUDEZ HIMSELF.

4. CONFIRMATION OF FERNANDEZ MALDONADO MEANS SEVERAL THINGS. FIRST, IT IS A RE-AFFIRMATION OF SENIORITY PRINCIPLE WHICH HAD BEEN HONORED IN BREACH BY CHANGES DURING LATTER PART OF VELASCO REGIME AND FIRST MONTHS OF MORALES BERMUDEZ GOVERNMENT. SECOND, IT MEANS MORE RADICAL VIEWS ASSOCIATED WITH FIRST PAHSE OF THE REVOLUTION WILL CONTINUE TO BE EXPRESSED AT HIGHEST LEVEL OF GOP. LEFTIST PRESS HAILED SWEARING IN OF FERNANDEZ MALDONADO AS GUARANTEE THAT REVOLUTION WILL PROCEED UNABATED AND THE "PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS" WILL PARTICIPATE.

5. WHILE IT IS LIKELY THAT FERNANDEZ MALDONADO WILL WORK FOR MORE RAPID SOCIALIZATION OF THE REVOLUTION, THE DECISION-MAKING JUNTA AND THE CABINET CONTINUE TO BE DOMINATED BY MORE MODERATE MEN. INCUMBENTS AND NEXT IN LINE FOR NAVY AND AIR MINISTRIES ARE MODERATES. NEW INTERIOR AND MINES MINISTERS ALSO CONSIDERED TO BE IN MODERATE GROUP. IF FERNANDEZ MALDONADO ESPOUSES RADICAL LINE HE MAY BE CONSISTENTLY OUT-VOTED BY OTHER TWO JUNTA MEMBERS AND THE PRESIDENT AND OVERRULED IN THE CABINET.

6. OVER LONG HAUL FERNANDEZ MALDONADO PROBABLY HOPES AS WAR MINISTER TO EXTEND HIS PERSONAL INFLUENCE OVER KEY REGIONAL ARMY COMMANDERS (WHO PROVIDE POWER BASE FOR MILGOV) AND BE INSTRUMENTAL IN APPOINTMENTS FOR ARMY JOBS. THE ACTIVE, INTELLIGENT AND RATHER CHARISMATIC FERNANDEZ MALDONADO IS ALSO EXPECTED TO DEVELOP THE CONSIDERABLE IMPLIED POWERS OF THE PRIME MINISTRY. WHETHER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO BECOMES "THE PRINCIPAL EXECUTOR" OF GOVERNMENT POLICY, AS LEFTIST PRESS SAYS HE IS, WILL DEPEND TO GREAT EXTENT ON HIS INTERACTION WITH PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ.
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